

SP-1026

SM

- 1) "IGNORANT" 2) "IRASCIBLE" 3) "BORING"
 - 4) "GREEN" 5) "GETS EVERYTHING WRONG" WHO?
- THE US SPY CHIEF!

CPYRGHT

[Following is a translation of an article by Ulf Nilson, datelined New York, in the Swedish-language daily newspaper Expressen Stockholm 28 December 1965.]

Lyndon Baines Johnson and his aides have an unique problem: the country's new spy chief is so boring that no one cares to listen to what he says and so ignorant that it does not matter.

That means that the more than 20,000 spies and agents all over the world who are employed by CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) may just as well insert ads under the heading "Position Wanted".

"No Genius"

The fact is that even if the above is slightly exaggerated the situation is extremely serious. Admiral William F. "Red" Raborn, 65, who got his job as chief of the super-secret spy center eight months ago appears according to ill-disposed reporters to be not exactly a genius in the espionage game.

He stumbles again and again over the difficult task of learning the strange names of foreign statesmen, cannot find their names on the map and bawls out his often extremely well qualified co-workers as if they were common men.

One evening a revolution occurred in a small country X. Raborn immediately telephoned the one in CIA who was responsible for this country and asked what was going on. The subordinate reported.

"And what the hell are you doing about it?" Raborn roared.

The subordinate told about the episode to Newsweek and sighed:

"The guy seems to think it is we who decide everywhere."

Stop!

On another occasion a CIA expert talked about the "ruling oligarchy" in a South American country.

"Stop!" ordered Raborn, as if he were on the bridge. "What does oligarchy mean?"

Dozens of countries where CIA operates (for example in South America) are called oligarchies practically every day in reports and newspaper articles. But the admiral is not exactly interested in reading.

He is on the other hand proud of being called a man of action. The most frightening proof so far: it was Raborn who brought about the massive invasion of the Dominican Republic last May.

"Does Not Know Anything"

Raborn made a name for himself in the Second World War and later as a kind of executive director of the division of the American Navy that built the Polaris missile. But it is one thing to head an industrial program and something entirely different to direct a whole pack of touchy, sometimes half-cracked people who have specialized in agent work.

The admiral is as green as grass, say the CIA people. He does not know one little bit about real espionage.

The result has been that the other US espionage organizations (there are nine of them) more and more prevail over the main organization, the CIA. The recommendations coming from the "professional spies" in CIA, who almost always are Goldwater conservatives, more and more rarely reach the president.

LRJ Can't Stand It

Lyndon Johnson is an impatient man and he does not care to listen to Raborn's expositions. Instead he calls on Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, who has not missed a math problem since he left grade school.

Today CIA is therefore, according to unanimous reports, an extremely competent and abundantly well financed spy organization which produces facts, analyses and recommendations as on a conveyor belt, without anyone learning about those facts, analyses and recommendations. The only one who reads them is Raborn, if he does. The reports pile up in stack after stack and are of no use at all.

And perhaps that is still the best that can happen, as a CIA man is supposed to have said. Better that they be forgotten entirely than that Raborn relay them to the president.

The fact is that Raborn gets everything wrong and if the spy chief gets to transmit to the president matters that he has totally misunderstood, anything can happen.

Photo Caption

Admiral William F. Raborn who has been chief of the US intelligence service CIA for eight months, has from all indications not made a reputation as an especially successful man in the post. The President is said to find him boring, subordinates say he is "green as grass".

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